

IN THE DRAWINGS

The attached sheets of drawings include changes to Figs. 4 and 9. These sheets, which include Figs. 4 and 9, replace the original sheets including Figs. 4 and 9.

Attachment: Replacement Sheets.

REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration of this application, as presently amended and in light of the following discussion, is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-9, 16, 17, 21, and 22 are currently pending. Claims 10-15, 18-20, 23, and 24 have been withdrawn from consideration; and Claims 1, 12, 17, 22, and 23 have been amended by the present amendment. The amendments to the claims are supported by the originally filed specification and do not add new matter.<sup>1</sup>

In the outstanding Office Action, the Drawings were objected to; the Specification was objected to as containing informalities; Claims 1-24 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 101 as being directed to non-statutory subject matter; Claims 1-3, 7, 8, 10-14, 16, 19, and 22-24 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2004/0125208 to Malone et al. (hereinafter, “Malone”) in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,659,617 to Fischer (hereinafter, “Fischer”); Claims 4-6 and 21 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Malone and Fischer in view of U.S. Patent Application No. 2002/0199103 to Dube (hereinafter, “Dube”); Claims 9, 15, 17, and 18 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Malone, Fischer, and U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2004/0039929 to Decime (hereinafter, “Decime”); and Claim 20 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Malone, Fischer, and U.S. Patent No. 6,237,098 to Libicki (hereinafter, “Libicki”).

Applicants wish to thank the Examiner for the interview granted to Applicants’ representatives on October 21, 2009, at which time the outstanding rejections of Claims 1, 10, 12, and 14 were discussed, as substantially summarized hereinafter. During the discussion, the Examiner indicated that the current claims should have been subject to a restriction requirement, restricting the claims into five groups. The Examiner also suggested

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<sup>1</sup> See, e.g., Fig. 1 and the description thereof in Applicants’ specification.

amendments to the specification to overcome the 35 U.S.C. § 101 rejections of the claims.

Finally, the Examiner indicated that the discussed claim language establishing that the claimed “certificate issuing server” is separate from the claimed “information processing equipment” appeared to distinguish over the prior art of record.

Regarding the restriction requirement raised by the Examiner during the interview, Applicants elect Group I, directed to Claims 1-9, 16, 17, 21, and 22. Applicants reserve the right to file one or more divisional applications directed to the non-elected claims.

Regarding the objections to the Drawings, new Drawings have been provided herewith. Accordingly, the objections to the Drawings have been overcome.

Regarding the objections to the Specification, the Specification has been amended in the manner suggested in the Office Action. Accordingly, the objections to the Specification have been overcome.

Regarding the 35 U.S.C. § 101 rejections of the claims, the Specification has been amended in the manner suggested by the Examiner during the interview. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the 35 U.S.C. § 101 rejections of the claims should be withdrawn.

Amended Claim 1 is directed to a certification system, comprising in part:

information processing equipment that processes information;

a certificate issuing server, *separate* from the information processing equipment, that issues an electronic certificate to certify an operating environment of the information processing equipment. [Emphasis Added].

Claim 1 has been amended to recite that the certificate issuing server is separate from the information processing equipment, and the certificate issuing server issues an electronic certificate to certify an operating environment of the information processing equipment.

As discussed during the interview, any combination of Malone and Fischer does not disclose or suggest a certificate issuing server, *separate* from the information processing equipment, that issues an electronic certificate to certify an operating environment of the information processing equipment, as recited in amended Claim 1.

The above discussion regarding independent Claim 1 also applies to independent Claim 22, which recites analogous features in a claim of a different scope.

Thus, it is respectfully submitted that independent Claims 1 and 22 (and all associated dependent claims) patentably define over any combination of Malone and Fischer.

Regarding the rejections of dependent Claims 2-9, 16, 17, and 21, the additional cited references have been considered but are not deemed more relevant than Malone and Fischer discussed above. Thus, it is respectfully submitted that these additional references do not remedy the deficiencies of Malone and Fischer.

Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that independent Claims 1 and 22 (and all associated dependent claims) patentably define over the art of record.

Consequently, in view of the present amendment and in light of the above discussion, the outstanding grounds for rejection are believed to have been overcome. The application as amended herewith is believed to be in condition for formal allowance. An early and favorable action to that effect is respectfully requested.

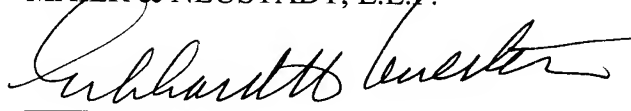
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Respectfully submitted,

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